THE OXFORD ENCYCLOPEDIA

OF THE

Modern Islamic World

John L. Esposito

EDITOR IN CHIEF
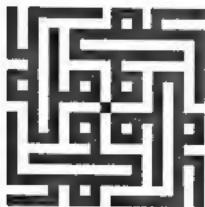
VOLUME I

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Abrahamian, Ervand. *Iran Between Two Revolutions*. Princeton, 1982.

Allworth, Edward. *Central Asia: A Century of Russian Rule*. New York, 1967.

Binder, Leonard. *The Ideological Revolution in the Middle East*. New York, 1964.

Botman, Selma. *The Rise of Egyptian Communism, 1939–1970*. Syracuse, N.Y., 1988.

Coulson, Noel J. *A History of Islamic Law*. Edinburgh, 1964.

Gallisot, René. *Mouvement ouvrier: Communisme et nationalismes dans le monde Arabe*. Paris, 1978.

Kepel, Gilles. *Les banlieues de l'Islam*. Paris, 1987.

Lapidus, Ira, and Edmund Burke, III, eds. *Islam, Politics, and Social Movements*. Berkeley, 1988.

Lewis, Bernard. "Communism and Islam." *The Middle East in Transition*, edited by Walter Laqueur. New York, 1958.

Nove, Alec, and J. A. Newth. *The Soviet Middle East*. London, 1968.

Rodinson, Maxime. *Marxisme et le monde musulman*. Paris, 1972.

ELLIS GOLDBERG

CONGRESSES. Although the sentiment of international Muslim solidarity is intrinsic to the faith of Islam, it took no organized form until modern times. In the course of the twentieth century, modernized communications made it possible to translate vague principles of solidarity into periodic congresses of Muslims from different lands. Some of these congresses have evolved into international Islamic organizations that promote political, economic, and cultural interaction among Muslim peoples and states.

First Initiatives. Muslim reformists were the first to suggest the holding of Islamic congresses, in writings dating from the late nineteenth century. These reformists sought a forum to promote and sanction the internal reform of Islam and also believed that an assembly of influential Muslims would strengthen Islam's ability to resist Western imperialism. The advent of easy and regular steamer transport made it possible to imagine regular gatherings of Muslim thinkers, activists, and notables. As a contemporary observer wrote in 1896, such a congress would "clear Islam of many unjust accusations, and establish its place in the concert of modern civilizations."

A number of émigré intellectuals in Cairo first popularized the idea in the Muslim world. In 1900 one of them, 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Kawākibī of Aleppo, published an influential tract entitled *Umm al-Qurā*, which purported to be the secret protocol of an Islamic congress convened in Mecca during the pilgrimage of 1899 (AH 1316). The imaginary congress culminated in a call

for a restored Arab caliphate, an idea then in vogue in reformist circles. Support for such a congress also became a staple of the reformist journal *Al-manār* published in Cairo by Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā of Syrian Tripoli. Kawākibī and Rashīd Riḍā both believed that Mecca during the pilgrimage offered the most appropriate stage for such a congress, but other reformists favored Istanbul or Cairo. The Crimean Tatar reformist Ismā'īl Gasprali (Gasprinskii) launched the first concrete initiative in Cairo, where he unsuccessfully attempted to convene a "general" Islamic congress in 1907–1908.

Kawākibī's book, Rashīd Riḍā's appeals, and Gasprali's initiative all aroused the suspicion of Ottoman authorities, who believed that a well-attended Islamic congress would fatally undermine the religious authority claimed by the Ottoman sultan-caliph. They feared the possible transformation of any such congress into an electoral college for choosing an Arab caliph who would champion the separation of the Arabic-speaking provinces from the Ottoman Empire. Steadfast Ottoman opposition thwarted all the early initiatives of the reformists and associated the congress idea with political dissidence. In 1911 Rashīd Riḍā wrote that "the Muslims are not yet ready to convene a general Islamic congress for discussion of their interests and how to improve their lot. Intellectuals have repeatedly advocated this step, but no one heard them, noticed them, or showed them any sympathy." [*See the biographies of Kawākibī, Rashīd Riḍā, and Gasprinskii.*]

Early Congresses. The final dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire in World War I removed the Ottoman obstacle and created a void, which a number of Muslim leaders and activists rushed to fill by convening Islamic congresses. In each instance they sought to mark their causes or their ambitions with the stamp of Islamic consensus. Some conveners sought wider Muslim support against non-Muslim enemies; others coveted the title of caliph, which they hoped to secure through the acclaim of a Muslim assembly.

In 1919, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk convened an Islamic congress in Anatolia to mobilize foreign Muslim support for his military campaigns. After his victory, however, Kemal took no further initiatives, and he ultimately severed Turkey from wider Islam by abolishing the caliphate in 1924. During the pilgrimage season of 1924, King Ḥusayn ibn 'Alī of the Hejaz (Ḥijāz) summoned a "pilgrimage congress" in Mecca to support his own short-lived claim to the caliphate, but he was driven into exile by 'Abd al-'Azīz ibn Sa'ūd, who occupied Mecca and

convened his own "world" congress during the pilgrimage season of 1926. This congress, which 'Abd al-'Azīz hoped would confer Islamic sanction on his administration of the holy cities, instead leveled many criticisms, and he did not reconvene it. [*See the biographies of Atatürk, Husayn ibn 'Alī, and Sa'ūd ('Abd al-'Azīz).*]

Also in 1926, the leading clerics of al-Azhar in Cairo summoned a "caliphate congress" to consider the effects of the Turkish abolition of the caliphate. The congress enjoyed the support of Egypt's King Fu'ād, who reputedly coveted the title of caliph, but no decision issued from the gathering. In 1931, Amīn al-Husaynī, *muftī* of Jerusalem, convened a "general" congress of Muslims in Jerusalem to secure foreign Muslim support for the Arab struggle against the British Mandate and Zionism. In 1935, Pan-Islamic activist Shakīb Arslān convened a congress of Europe's Muslims in Geneva to carry the protest against imperialism to the heart of Europe. And in 1938, Abdürräshid Ibragimov, the Volga Tatar Pan-Islamist, convened a "world" congress in Tokyo in a bid to link Japan and Islam in a common struggle against European imperialism.

Each of these early congresses resolved to create a permanent organization and convene additional congresses, but all such efforts were foiled by internal rivalries or by the intervention of the European powers. Each of the early congresses also revolved around political rather than doctrinal matters. Following this precedent, subsequent congresses remained far more concerned with the defense of Islam than with its reform.

The painful partitions of India and Palestine, as well as improvements in air travel, encouraged new initiatives in the 1940s and 1950s. In 1949 Pakistan sponsored the creation of the Karachi-based World Islamic Congress, presided over by the exiled Palestinian leader Amīn al-Husaynī. The organization aimed to promote solidarity between Pakistani and Arab Muslims against India and Israel. Beginning in 1953, many of the leading figures in Islamic activism attended the meetings in Jerusalem of the General Islamic Conference for Jerusalem, which operated under the auspices of the Muslim Brotherhood. It served to organize international Islamic support against Israel and enjoyed the active support of Jordan. These congresses briefly succeeded in creating secretariats and even reconvened at wide intervals before they too became practically defunct. [*See the biography of Husaynī.*]

Obstacle of Arabism. With the progress of decolonization, several Muslim leaders floated new plans for the creation of a permanent organization of independent Muslim states. Pakistan, anxious to secure wider Muslim support against India, took a number of initiatives, especially during a failed 1952 campaign for a conference of Muslim prime ministers. During the Meccan pilgrimage of 1954, an "Islamic congress" assembled the heads of state of Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and Egypt in Mecca and created a standing organization headquartered in Cairo. The initiative for an organization of Muslims states ran aground, however, as Egypt moved increasingly toward a revolutionary Pan-Arabism under its leader Gamal Abdel Nasser (Jamāl 'Abd al-Nāṣir). By the mid-1950s Egypt's secular Pan-Arabism had become the dominant ideology in the Arab world. In the name of this ideology Egypt suppressed the Muslim Brotherhood at home and launched a cold war against Saudi Arabia, culminating in Egyptian military intervention in Yemen. [*See* Nasserism *and the biography of Nasser.*]

Saudi Arabia, under siege by Pan-Arab Egypt, responded by developing a rival Pan-Islam around which it rallied other besieged regimes and the Muslim Brotherhood. For this purpose the Saudi government sponsored the establishment in 1962 of the Mecca-based Muslim World League, which built a worldwide network of Muslim clients. The league not only operated among pilgrims but also assembled many congresses of Muslim activists and *'ulamā* from abroad, especially from among the Muslim Brotherhood. Beginning in 1964, Egypt responded by organizing congresses of Egyptian and foreign *'ulamā* under the auspices of al-Azhar's Academy of Islamic Researches. These rival bodies then convened a succession of dueling congresses in Mecca and Cairo, each claiming the sole prerogative of defining Islam in such as way as to legitimate Saudi or Egyptian policy. In 1965–1966 Saudi Arabia's King Fayṣal launched a campaign for an Islamic summit conference that would have countered the Arab summits dominated by Egypt; however, Nasser had sufficient influence to thwart the initiative, which he denounced as a foreign-inspired "Islamic pact" designed to defend the interests of Western imperialism. [*See* Muslim World League; *for the biography of Fayṣal, see under Sa'ūd.*]

Organization of the Islamic Conference. Israel's 1967 defeat of the combined Arab armies and annexation of East Jerusalem eroded faith in the brand of Pan-Arabism championed by Egypt. They damaged Nasser's standing and inspired a return to Islam, setting the scene for a renewed Saudi initiative. In September

1969, following an arsonist's attack against the al-Aqṣā mosque in Jerusalem, Muslim heads of state set aside their differences and met in Rabat in the first Islamic summit conference. King Fayṣal took this opportunity to press for the creation of a permanent organization of Muslim states. This time the effort succeeded, and in May 1971 the participating states established the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC). The new organization, headquartered in Jeddah (pending the restoration of Jerusalem to Islam), adopted its charter in March 1972.

The OIC eventually achieved minor prominence in regional diplomacy, principally through the organization of triennial Islamic summit conferences and annual conferences of the foreign ministers of member states. The OIC's activities fell into three broad categories. First, it extended moral support to Muslim states and movements engaged in conflicts with non-Muslims. Most of these efforts were devoted to the causes of Palestine and Jerusalem, although the OIC supported many other Muslim resistance movements from Afghanistan to the Philippines. Its conferences passed hundreds of resolutions on these issues, although its support for embattled Muslims remained strictly declaratory. Second, the organization offered mediation in disputes and wars between its own members. However, the deep divisions among member states limited the moral force of the OIC's calls for peace, and in any case it lacked armed force for truce supervision or peacekeeping. In practice, the United Nations played a far greater role than the OIC in mediating conflicts between Muslim states. Finally, the OIC sponsored an array of subsidiary and affiliated institutions to promote political, economic, and cultural cooperation among its members. The most influential of these institutions was the Islamic Development Bank, established in December 1973 and formally opened in October 1975. The bank, funded by the wealthier OIC states, financed development projects that promoted cooperation and trade among member states. Yet despite these economic efforts, the amount of trade among member states, as a percentage of their overall trade, continued to decline throughout the 1980s. [See Islamic Development Bank.]

The OIC represented the culmination of government efforts to organize Muslim states, but it remained a weak organization, supported largely by Saudi funds and biased in favor of Saudi policies. For this reason, the existence of the OIC did not prevent several of its members from independently organizing international Islamic congresses and organizations. They did so to garner Muslim support for their own policies, often in defiance of Saudi Arabia and the OIC [See Organization of the Islamic Conference.]

Impact of Libya and Iran. In September 1969, shortly before the first Islamic summit, Muʿammar al-Qadhdhāfī carried out a coup in Libya and instituted a revolutionary regime based upon his own interpretation of Islam. Qadhdhāfī made it clear that he intended to promote his own leadership of Islam, and the following year he convened a conference that laid the foundations of the Tripoli-based Islamic Call Society (later the World Islamic Call Society). This organization convened frequent conferences in later years and through its far-flung branches did much to disseminate Qadhdhāfī's eclectic vision of Islam beyond Libya's borders. [See Islamic Call Society *and the biography of Qadhdhāfī.*]

Iran played an even more important role in stimulating the rapid growth in the variety of Islamic conferences in the 1980s. After the revolution in 1979, and especially after the outbreak of war with Iraq in 1980, Iran conducted a vigorous campaign against Saudi Arabia's claim to organize the consensus of Islam. For a decade Iran virtually ignored the OIC and convened frequent conferences of its own clients and supporters from abroad. Secretariats based in Tehran supported a succession of organizations, including the World Congress of Friday Imams and Prayer Leaders (from 1982), the Conference on Islamic Thought (from 1983), and the International Conference to Support the Islamic Revolution of the People of Palestine (from 1991). Despite their different names, these congress initiatives reassembled many of the same foreign participants, who placed an Islamic stamp of approval on Iran's policies. Iran also convened many extraordinary conferences after the killing of several hundred Iranians in Mecca during the pilgrimage season of 1987, and after Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini's edict against the novelist Salman Rushdie in 1989. [See Rushdie Affair.]

Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Iraq were aligned together in opposition to Iran throughout the 1980s and cooperated in convening congresses of those Muslim figures who were prepared to sanction their own policies in the name of Islam. Existing organizations such as Saudi Arabia's Muslim World League and Egypt's Academy of Islamic Researches expanded their cooperation. Saudi Arabia and Egypt also combined with Iraq in 1983 to

establish the Baghdad-based Popular Islamic Conference, which mobilized Muslim support for Iraq's war against Iran. (When the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990 turned Iraq and Saudi Arabia from allies into enemies, both sides simultaneously convened the Popular Islamic Conference in Baghdad and Mecca, where each passed resolutions condemning the other.)

Islamist Congresses. In the 1990s a growing number of semiclandestine Islamist movements came into the open as governments adopted policies of political liberalization. These movements had strengthened their links during the 1980s in little-publicized conferences, often held in Europe. As they began to acquire legitimate standing and even power, they launched their own congress initiatives. In 1990 'Abd al-Raḥmān Khalīfah, leader of the Jordanian Muslim Brotherhood, convened a World Islamic Popular Gathering in Amman that was attended by the leading figures of the Muslim Brotherhood worldwide. In 1991 Ḥasan al-Turābī, the Islamist guide of the Sudanese regime, convened a Popular Arab Islamic Conference in Khartoum attended by many of the most notable Islamists. The conference created a permanent secretariat, and Turābī presented the new organization as the populist alternative to the OIC. [*See the biography of Turābī.*]

The plethora of organizations that summoned Islamic congresses and conferences reflected the intensified competition for authority in contemporary Islam. This competition had long pitted states against one another. But as Islam became the common language of protest, congresses increasingly brought together Islamist movements of opposition seeking to help one another in the pursuit of power. Less than a century after Kawākibī's fantasy, a crowded calendar of congresses binds the world of Islam together as never before. It remains uncertain, however, whether these often competing institutions bridge the differences between Muslims or serve to widen them.

[*See also* Da'wah, *article on* Institutionalization.]

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Dawisha, Adeed, ed. *Islam in Foreign Policy.* Cambridge, 1983. Ten country studies on the general role of Islam in the formulation of foreign policy.

Kramer, Martin. *Islam Assembled: The Advent of the Muslim Congresses.* New York, 1986. Event-by-event account of the development of Islamic congresses, from the first initiatives through World War II, with extensive bibliography.

Landau, Jacob. *The Politics of Pan-Islam: Ideology and Organization.* Oxford, 1990. Detailed survey of the political role of Pan-Islam beginning from the late Ottoman period, with extensive bibliography.

Levtzion, Nehemia. *International Islamic Solidarity and Its Limitations.* Jerusalem, 1979. Includes a survey of the congresses and their sponsoring organizations.

Mattes, Hanspeter. *Die innere und äussere islamische Mission Libyens.* Mainz, 1986. Considers the activities of Libya's Islamic Call Society.

Middle East Contemporary Survey. New York (now Boulder), 1978–. Commencing with volume 5 (1980–1981), each volume of this annual reference work features an essay on current Pan-Islamic activities, including conferences sponsored by the OIC, state-supported Islamic organizations, and Islamist movements.

Moinuddin, Hasan. *The Charter of the Islamic Conference.* Oxford, 1987. Examines the constitutional foundation of the OIC.

Piscatori, J. P. *Islam in a World of Nation-States.* Cambridge, 1986. Considers the tension between Islamic unity and the modern state.

Schulze, Reinhard. *Islamischer Internationalismus im 20. Jahrhundert: Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der Islamischen Weltliga.* Leiden, 1990. Detailed case study of the Mecca-based Muslim World League, preceded by a general account of the development of Islamic congresses.

MARTIN KRAMER

CONSEIL NATIONAL DES FRANÇAIS MU-
SULMANS. Founded in France in 1989 and governed by the Law on Associations of 1 July 1901, the Conseil National des Français Musulmans (CNFM) was reformed in 1992 and now consists of 190 associations with 14,000 members. Its council includes 40 members, either coopted or presidents of the most important affiliated associations. Its registered office is in Dole in the Jura, its president is Hamaloui Mekachera, and its secretary-general is Soraya Djebbour.

There are approximately 2.5 million French Muslims, most of whom are *harkis* and their children. *Harkis* are Muslim soldiers who fought in the French army during the Algerian war of independence and left Algeria to live in France at the war's end in 1962.

The council acts as a lobby and is generally not directly engaged in politics. Although French Muslims have civil rights equal to those of other French citizens, the council seeks the end of social and economic discrimination against Muslims in France and the full integration of Muslims into French society. It obtains assistance for them in housing, education, and welfare, and it opposes xenophobia, racism, and anti-Semitism. The council militates in favor of "French Islamic institu-